

Corner Tavern
CH-687
Patuxent City
Public

Circa 1950

Standing at the intersection of Brandywine and Prince Frederick Roads, in the heart of the earlier 19th century village of Patuxent City, the Corner Tavern is significant in its association with the era of legalized gambling in Charles County. During the 1940s and 50s, casino, motor courts and lounges were constructed along major roadways. Roadside architecture, such as the Corner Tavern was often loosely based on a whimsical or exotic theme. In this case false Germanic Fachwerk, or exposed heavy timbers framing, is used to attract visitors by virtue of its dissimilarity with the surrounding landscape.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-687

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Corner Tavern
other

2. Location

street and number 2605 Brandywine Road not for publication
city, town Patuxent City X vicinity
county Charles

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Ruth B. Neely
street and number 2605 Brandywine Road telephone Unknown
city, town Hughesville state MD zip code 20637

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 37 p.9
city, town LaPlata liber 1256 folio 269

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
☐ Other

6. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Current Function | Resource Count |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | Contributing Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> defense | <input type="checkbox"/> sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | | <input type="checkbox"/> domestic | <input type="checkbox"/> structures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> objects |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Total |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> government | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> health care | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> unknown | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: | |
| | | | Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory |
| | | | 0 |

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-687

Condition

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> altered |

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Corner Tavern is associated with the whimsical and exotic roadside architecture constructed in Charles County and in many areas throughout the country during the 1940s, 50s and 60s. Standing at the intersection of Brandywine and Prince Frederick Road in the heart of the earlier 19th century village of Patuxent City, this structure resembles half-timbered 17th century European building traditions. The Corner Tavern is a side gable structure, two stories in height and three bays at the center, flanked by single bay, 1 story wings on either side. By far the most striking characteristics is the stucco/half-timbered exterior combined with the stucco chimney stacks on either gable end. Large shed dormers appear on the secondary wings of the west elevation. The roof material is asphalt shingles. The foundation was not observable at the time of the survey. Fenestration is also unusual consisting of narrow 8/8 lights.

The structure currently faces west but originally may have had entrances on both the east and west elevations or primarily on the east end. Substantial grading of Brandywine Road has raised the level of the street approximately three feet and access to the ground level is through a series of descending stairs. This elevation features a full width shed porch that is enclosed on either end. Windows consist of a paired 1/1 metal replacement set flanked by single 1/1 windows on either side. At each end, the dormer holds a single replacement window.

Moving counterclockwise, the south elevation, fronting Prince Frederick Road, consists of three windows and a door. The second story has symmetrical windows flanking either side of the chimney. Below this is a set of metal doors on the west side and a pair of 8/8 windows to the east.

Moving onto the rear elevation, the second story windows in the main block mirror those on the east side. On the first floor, the wings included a grouping of three 8/8 windows each. The first floor main block is asymmetrical and has been altered by an addition to the rear. The main block includes a rear door which is unusually adorned with decorative cast iron posts, suggesting this was more than simply a utilitarian passageway.

The north elevation includes a first floor door and two second story windows, one original and one replacement. This elevation also shows evidence of a former addition.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-687

| Period | Areas of Significance | Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> performing arts | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000- | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> social history | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: | |

Specific dates C. 1950

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates C. 1950

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Corner Tavern is significant in its association with the era of legalized gambling in Charles County. During the 1940s and 1950s, an important entertainment industry grew up primarily along Crain Highway, but spread along other major transportation routes to tourist destinations. One of the most influential of the entertainment industries that developed in the county was gambling.

The first slot machines were brought to the area in the 1930s in preparation for the tercentenary celebration of the landing of the Ark and the Dove. The first of these "one-armed bandits" were installed in stores and hotels mostly in St. Mary's County. Charles County soon followed their lead by placing slot machines at Chapel Point and Cobb Island. In 1949, Charles County legalized gambling, and casinos began to appear along Crain Highway where they were readily accessible from Baltimore and Washington, DC. Along with the casinos came restaurants, cocktail lounges, and motels. Gambling became such an important business in Charles County that at one point a full quarter of the county's revenue derived from slot machines. After slot machines were banned in Charles County in 1967, the area's popularity as a travel destination deteriorated. The construction of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge offered Washingtonians ready access to Maryland's ocean side resorts, draining the tourism trade out of southern Maryland.

This particular strip of land has a confusing history due to several road re-alignments of the twentieth century. During the 19th century it appears that the road extended on the north and east side of the present tavern site. This parcel was then known as part of the hog lot. During the early 1950's Prince Frederick Road was widened and, Estelle H. Lindsey sold one acre to Walter and Mary Coleman. Visual evidence, including unusual grading, suggests that the road has again been altered since the building's construction. Relevant plats that could shed light on the history of the Patuxent City village, although referenced, could not be located.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-687

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property _____

Acreage of historical setting _____

Quadrangle name Benedict

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Corner Tavern is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 37, Grid 13, Parcel 9.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning

date 4/25/01

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town LaPlata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH- 687

Section 8 Page 1

Corner Tavern

name of property

Charles County, MD

county and state

Chain of title:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| June 25, 1956 | Estelle H. Lindsey, To Walter W. and Mary Coleman. 1 acre more or less. Also see To Road Commission 103/417 and 117/142 125:123 |
| April 27, 1964 | Corner Tavern, Inc. To Nolan E. and Ursula V.R. Maddox, mortgage .9 acres 168:707 |
| April 29, 1966 | Nolan E. and Ursula V.R. Maddox to Kenneth E. Berry and Edna E. Berry. 181:424 |
| September 28, 1981 | Louis P. Jenkins, attorney for purpose of foreclosure and William D. Zantzinger to Hamdin-Z (Refers to Equity 7389) 804:1 |
| December 18, 1986 | Hamdin-Z To Patuxent City Enterprises 1183:198 |
| October 26, 1987 | Patuxent City Enterprises to Ruth B. Neely 1256:269 |

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No.CH-687

Section 9 Page 1

Corner Tavern

name of property

Charles County, Maryland

county and state

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.





